

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of pending Claims 1 – 31 in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

On page 2 of the Office Action, it is indicated that Claims 12 and 27 are objected to as being depended upon a rejected base claim, but would otherwise be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the based claim and any intervening claims from which they respectively depend. Accordingly, independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the features originally recited in Claim 12, and independent Claim 15 has been amended to include the features originally recited in Claim 27. Claims 12 and 27, then, are currently canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

In view of the amendments to place independent Claims 1 and 15 in condition for allowance, various other dependent claims have been amended accordingly. In addition, Claim 3 is currently canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Therefore, in view of the current amendments to the claims, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13-26, and 28-31 are in condition for allowance. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1 – 11, 13 – 26, and 28 - 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sampat, *et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,279,029; hereafter “Sampat”) in view of Amini, *et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,581,102; hereafter “Amini”) and Rajan, (U.S. Published Application 2001/0000962; hereafter “Rajan”).

It is respectfully submitted that this rejection is rendered moot in view of the aforementioned amendments to the claims, particularly those to independent Claims 1 and 15 to recite the allowable features of Claims 12 and 27, respectively.

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the current rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Conclusion

All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance, and early and forthright issuance of a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Dated: September 1, 2009

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206-315-7912